

Pancake Festival On Lake Baikal — Detailed description

Trip Length: Group: 2-10 Departure: Fixed Period: December - January

Trip overview

The Pancake Week or Maslenitsa in Russia is a very fun holiday that is celebrated to see severe winter off and to honour spring bringing the awakening of nature and warm sun. For Russians spring was always a symbol of the beginning of a new life and the end of frosts. Every day of the Pancake Week has its own name - Gourmand, Revelry, Mother-in-Law Night etc. In the end of the week everyone meets in the main city square to put a straw effigy representing Winter to the flames of a bonfire.

The Maslenitsa week is the last week before the Great Lent when it is still allowed to eat butter, milk, meat, and fish. According to Orthodox church, the week is also called Cheesefare Week. In this time people usually prepared yellow, round and hot pancakes symbolizing the sun. The latter was always respected as it gives life and strength to all living beings. They believe that when eating a pancake one shares the warmth and the power of the sun.

This journey offers you to celebrate Maslenitsa in the very north of Lake Baikal in Siberia, to learn old Russian customs and taste traditional pancakes. Also you will enjoy the hot springs in the north of the Baikal, try true Russian banya, and visit the factory producing traditional felt boots.

Ideal tour for a family or friends group as well as for solo travellers to get plunged in a warm atmosphere of Siberian traditions!

Highlights

- Uncommon and fun stay, rich in various activities
- Discovery of local traditions

Tour type

NATURE

Difficulty

Physical rating not assigned

Comfort

Standard — most of nights in comfortable rooms, some nights in tents or rooms with shared WC.

Program

Day 1 — -

Day 2 — -

Day 3 — -

Day 4 — -

Day 5 — -

Day 6 — -

Day 7 — -

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Day 8 — -

Day 9 — -

Day 10 — -

Day 11 — -

Day 12 — -

Departures

New departures available soon

Note

NB: If flight from Ulan-Ude to Nizhneangarsk is cancelled, we will have to take train from Irkutsk to Severobaikalsk and cancel visit to Ulan-Ude. The rest of the programme will stay invariable. Meals during train journey from Severobaikalsk to Irkutsk are not included. Small group supplement if 2-3 participants: 18760 RUB per person (approx. 440 EUR) Supplement for the group of 4-5 participants: 4680 RUB per person (approx. 110 EUR)

What's included

Price includes

- English-speaking guide
- Russian-speaking guide
- Accommodation as per itinerary
- Transport as per itinerary
- Excursions and visits as per itinerary
- Letter of invitation

Price does not include

- Meals as per itinerary
- Visa invitation and registration of passports (for foreign citizens, if necessary)
- Personal expenses and tips
- Visa fees and travel insurance
- Ski rental
- Bathing in springs
- Airplane/ train tickets
- Bathing in hot springs

Checklist & Equipment

You will need in Russia in winter:

- to protect yourself from the cold weather;
- to protect yourself from the wind;
- to protect your feet from moisture;
- to protect yourself from the sun's reflection from ice and snow.

Allow the system of "three layers":

- The first layer, called "second skin", determines the performance of the other two layers. It will transport sweat to the next layer and dry quickly to avoid cooling after exercise. Therefore forget the cotton retains moisture in the skin and choose underwear in synthetic fabrics.
- The second layer must keep the heat of the body as long as possible. Warm synthetic or mixed (wool or fleece turtleneck sweater) fabrics, that dry quickly, are preferable.
- The third layer should protect you against wind and moisture. Choose a jacket, long enough, 100% waterproof, preferably with hood.

Recommended checklist

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comfortable shoes for trekking

raincoat / windproof and waterproof jacket with HOOD!

sunglasses

swimsuit / swim trunks

towel

comfortable winter boots (suitable for walking on ice and snow)

fleece jacket/sweater with collar

warm mittens (for convenience, thin gloves and a second layer of mittens with fur) / ski gloves

winter expedition boots (like Sorel or Baffin)

fleece balaclava

moisturizing cream

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Meals

At restaurants and homestays in cities, traditional cuisine consists of local specialties.

If you are a vegetarian or have any particular preferences, please let us know, so we could adapt the menu.

Laundry

Some hotels and inns offer laundry services for a variable sum of money. It is sometimes possible to use laundry services at homestay (when there is running water) for a fee.

Visa

You need a tourist visa to travel to Russia. It can be issued for a maximum period of 30 days. Your passport has to be valid for at least six months after the expiry date of your visa and to have at least two blank pages.

BaikalNature offers visa support and has created "BaikalNature letter of invitation" package. If you buy a BaikalNature tour, this package is absolutely free; when you buy any other BaikalNature service, you will have to pay for this package.

For questions regarding obtaining an electronic visa, please contact your tour manager.

Money

The Russian currency is ruble. The cost of travel and other services is always fixed in rubles. Please note that cards from foreign banks do not work in Russia at the moment. Tourists can obtain a bank card from a Russian bank in advance or travel with cash. If you have euros or dollars with you, exchange offices will allow you to change them easily in the cities. It is also worth noting that the exchange rate at airports

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is usually not the most favorable. It is better to exchange in big cities (you can check the current exchange rate online). Important! Only new banknotes without defects or any traces are accepted for exchange.

Tipping

All persons who compose the BaikalNature travel team (guides, drivers, cooks, etc.) are paid a decent wage for their services and do not expect any tips from you. So you have no obligation to leave anything. If you really want to express your satisfaction by leaving a gratuity, and if it is in foreign currency, be aware that torn or glued coins and banknotes cannot be exchanged. Anyway, thank you for your tips, left at your discretion in envelopes.

Health

No compulsory vaccination.

You need to get a health examination before a great trip. Consult your doctor. Get a dental checkup. If you have health problems that could worsen during the trip, make sure you have taken all your medications with you.

It is advisable to keep the following vaccines valid:

- diphtheria,
- tetanus,
- Polio.

Tick-borne encephalitis is present in areas of forest, taiga where ticks are the carriers of encephalitis between May and July. As of August, they are no longer carrying the virus. If you do not get vaccinated, you should follow the basic precautions, including:

- protective clothes
- use of repellents
- daily check of the skin.

It is also possible to take out special insurance covering the analysis of the insect and vaccines.

Provide a first aid kit that includes among other items:

- aspirin or paracetamol,
- anti-diarrheal pills,
- antiseptic,
- adhesive plaster,
- sterile pads.

If you have individual diseases, make sure you have taken your medications.

Emergency Contact

You can contact BaikalNature by phone: +7 924 531 87 01 (What's App, Telegram, Viber)

In addition, your call will be forwarded to your manager, reachable 7/7.

Legal Mentions

Professional Guarantees: BaikalNature LLC (ООО "БайкалНейче"), United Federal Register of Tour Operators number: RTO 009402.

Financial Guarantee: "Gaide insurance company" JSC (АО "Страховая компания Гайде"). Insurance contract N 4875/2422-49 from August 6, 2024. Amount of coverage: 500 000 RUB. Legal and actual address: BaikalNature LLC, 55 Dekabrskikh Sobyti Str., office 204.1 664007 Irkutsk Russia

Travel Insurance

In addition to your personal insurance, you have an opportunity to purchase local insurance. Please, do not hesitate to ask us about our services.

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